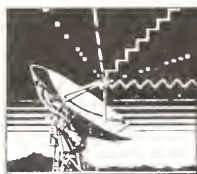


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Broadcasters Letter

United States Department of Agriculture • Office of Communications • Washington, DC 20250-1300

Letter No. 2738

November 3, 1995

FOOD STAMP PARTICIPATION DROPS BELOW 26 MILLION -- Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman said (October 30) that the number of people receiving food stamp benefits dropped to 25.9 million nationwide in August, the first time participation has dropped below 26 million in three years. The August figure represents a decrease of 1.2 million since August 1994. It was the thirteenth straight month in which participation was lower than the corresponding month one year earlier. Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman said, "More than a million people who needed food stamps a year ago now are able to make it without help. The decline in participation has resulted in a savings of more than \$661 million since August 1994." **Contact: Murray Rapp (703) 305-2039.**

USDA OUSTS MORE THAN 750 INELIGIBLE STORES -- More than 750 ineligible stores were removed from the Food Stamp Program in seven cities across the country as part of USDA's ongoing effort to combat food stamp fraud. This action by USDA's Food and Consumer Service is a result of "Operation Checkout," an effort of USDA's Office of Inspector General and the Food and Consumer Service to intensify the crackdown on food stamp fraud. Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman said among the most egregious examples of ineligible retailers uncovered in the sweeps were "grocery" stores with little or no food on their shelves, liquor, video and clothing stores. "Operation Checkout" sweeps have been conducted by USDA in New York City, Washington, Miami, Chicago, Dallas, St. Louis, and Oakland. Sweeps are continuing across the nation. **Contact: Murray Rapp (703) 305-2039.**

DIRECTOR OF RISK ASSESSMENT OFFICE NAMED -- Alwynelle S. Ahl has been selected as the first Director of the Office of Risk Assessment and Cost-Benefit Analysis for the U.S. Department of Agriculture. This office was established in accordance with the Federal Crop Insurance Reform and Department of Agriculture Reorganization Act of 1994. The new office is primarily responsible for ensuring that analyses of major USDA regulations affecting human health, safety, or the environment are performed consistently and include a risk assessment and cost-benefit analysis that is scientifically sound. Ahl had served as Acting Chief of Planning and Risk Analysis Systems for Policy and Program Development in the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service of USDA. **Contact: Maria Bynum (202) 720-5192.**

GLICKMAN HOSTS FARM BILL FORUMS -- A three-day Farm Bill Forum was hosted by Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman at the U.S. Department of Agriculture October 31 through November 2 to discuss congressional proposals for farm programs. On the first day, the forum focused on the direction of legislative proposals for agriculture, particularly commodity programs and research. The forum covered rural development and farm credit topics on the second day. On the final day, conservation proposals were the primary topic. **Contact: Johna Pierce (202) 720-4623.**

URBAN PROJECTS RECEIVE USDA ASSISTANCE --The U.S. Department of Agriculture will provide \$500,000 in grants and conservation assistance to 39 groups in Los Angeles as part of the Urban Resources Partnership. Projects will range from developing community and school gardens to neighborhood beautification, habitat restoration, and educational workshops and facilities. Two USDA agencies, the Forest Service and the Natural Resources Conservation Service, are funding the \$500,000 grant. The Urban Resources Partnership is a coalition of seven federal agencies and state and local governments in eight cities across the country -- Los Angeles, Atlanta, Chicago, Denver, East St. Louis, New York, Philadelphia, and Seattle. The partnership provides funding and technical assistance to community-based groups participating in a variety of natural resource projects. **Contact: Diana Morse (202) 720-4772.**

USDA CUTS COSTS -- Secretary of Agriculture Dan Glickman announced (October 26) that the reengineering of the purchase card system at USDA will save millions of dollars and improve USDA's purchasing process. Government purchase cards are commercial credit cards used to purchase a wide range of goods and services other than travel. When fully implemented, the new process has the potential for achieving \$45 million in administrative efficiencies by the year 2000. Four common objectives of USDA's reengineering efforts are to achieve dramatic improvements in cost, speed, efficiency and service delivery. This reinvented purchase card system meets all those objectives. Paper-based procurement processes are slow and inefficient, and cost approximately \$77 per purchase order. Wardell C. Townsend, Jr., Assistant Agriculture Secretary for Administration, said, "With our reengineered process, we expect to reduce costs to \$17 per transaction." **Contact: Martha Cashion (202) 720-3310.**

FOREST SERVICE DIRECTED TO COMPLY WITH COURT ORDER -- Under Secretary for Natural Resources and Environment James R. Lyons (October 26) instructed Forest Service Chief Jack Ward Thomas to take all necessary actions to comply with the order of the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals to make available certain timber sales. Lyons also instructed the Forest Service to work closely with contract holders to seek voluntary modifications to timber sales where impacts on water quality and wildlife habitat remain a concern. **Contact: Jim Petterson (202) 720-4623.**

PL480 ALLOCATIONS --The U.S. Department of Agriculture (October 26) announced tentative fiscal year 1996 allocations of \$255 million to 23 countries to cover commodity financing extended under Title I of the Food for Peace Program (Public Law 480). The allocation also includes commodity grants under the Food for Progress Program, funded by Title I appropriations. Commodity allocations reflect the current tight supply situation, particularly for feed grains and wheat. Factors that determine priorities for country allocations include food needs, potential for becoming a commercial U.S. market and improvement of food security through agricultural projects and economic measures. **Contact: Glenn Kaup (202) 720-3329.**

CCC INTEREST RATE IS 5-5/8 PERCENT -- Grant Buntrock, Acting Executive Vice President of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC), said commodity loans disbursed in November by the CCC will carry a 5-5/8 percent interest rate. This percentage is the same as October's level and reflects the interest rate charged CCC by the U.S. Treasury. **Contact: Bruce Merkle (202) 720-8206.**

FROM OUR RADIO SERVICE

AGRICULTURE USA # 2005 -- Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman held a three-day Farm Bill Forum this week to learn more about the impact that expected changes in farm programs will have on farm policy. In this edition of *Agriculture USA*, Brenda Curtis analyzes the various sides of the farm bill issue discussed at the Farm Bill Forum. **(Weekly cassette -- five minute documentary).**

CONSUMER TIME # 1484 -- Gleaning the food. Fighting food stamp fraud. Plant those bulbs. Higher prices for cotton products? Unwanted fall and winter house guests? **(Weekly cassette -- consumer features).**

AGRITAPE # 1997 -- The Farm Bill Forum. CRP payments. Russian harvest small, not disastrous. Rail car shortages: A new study. Another "Farm Crisis." **(Weekly cassette -- news features).**

UPCOMING ON USDA RADIO NEWSLINE: Tuesday, November 14, weekly weather and crop outlook; fruit and tree nuts outlook and poultry outlook. Monday, November 20, agricultural outlook. Tuesday, November 21, rice yearbook; U.S. agricultural trade update and weekly weather and crop outlook. **These are USDA reports we know about in advance. Our newslines carry many stories every day which are not listed in this lineup.**

USDA RADIO NEWSLINES (202) 488-8358 or 8359.

COMREX ENCODED (202) 720-2545

Material changed at 5:00 p.m., ET, each working day and 10:30 a.m. on crop report days.

FROM OUR TELEVISION SERVICE

FEATURES: Patrick O'Leary takes a look at "Gleaning" -- a process of saving good food from going to waste and getting that food to the hungry and those in need.

ACTUALITIES: Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman comments on issues from the Farm Bill Forum and USDA's "Operation Checkout" an effort to curb food stamp trafficking.

SATELLITE COORDINATES FOR TV NEWSFEEDS: Thursdays at 3:45-4:00 p.m. ET on Telstar 303, Transponder 5H(horizontal), Channel 10, Downlink Frequency 3900 MHz, Audio, 6.2/6.8.

Comments and suggestions are welcome regarding USDA broadcast services. Call Larry Quinn, (202)720-6072, or write to: Room 1618-S, USDA, Washington, D.C. 20250-1300.

OFF MIKE

49 YEARS...with the same radio station and aiming for 50! **Bill McReynolds** (WOAI, San Antonio, TX) has been a farm broadcaster for 45 of those years. We spoke with Bill during personal travel to his city last week. WOAI was one of the major stations I tuned in while growing up on our Oklahoma wheat farm.

IT'S DRY...in Kansas wheat country, reports **Larry Steckline** (Mid America Ag Network, Wichita, KS). Larry downlinked our live via satellite TV coverage of Agriculture Secretary **Dan Glickman's** Farm Bill Forum this week. Larry continues to do both radio and TV agricultural broadcasting and reports that their network is expanding to more stations in Nebraska.

WELCOME VISITOR...this week was **Rich Hull** (AgriTalk, Kansas City, MO) who was in Washington to assist in engineering their daily network program from the northern Virginia office of former Secretary of Agriculture **John Block** who served as guest host. **Ken Root**, AgriTalk regular host, was vacationing this week. Rich says that the AgriTalk radio program is heard on 125 stations in 26 states.

NEW FARM DIRECTOR...at WSOY (Decatur, IL) is **Gene Blue**, a corn and soybean farmer since 1983 in DeWitt County. Gene joined WSOY's Morning Show team on October 16. Station General Manager **Lynn McClure** says that Gene has strong roots in central Illinois and a commitment to the future and viability of agribusiness careers. His phone number is (217) 877-5371.

DON'T FORGET...to return the form telling us if you want stay on our mailing list for this letter. Please **respond by December 1**. Make needed updates to your address if you wish to continue receiving it. The form appeared on page 4 of last week's letter. If you need a form, call and leave your fax number.



LARRY A. QUINN, Director

Video, Teleconference and Radio Center



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